**COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS THROUGH THE ARTS**

**Some givens:**

* If we are to position ourselves as arts specialists then we need to learn how to directly contribute to overall student achievement.
  + There is minimal interaction between arts specialists and teachers in other academic domains.
    - The majority of arts programs in our schools are celebratory events used to raise the public profile of a school.
* Standards are here to stay
  + Standards are not impediments to learning. Artists too have to conform to their own set of professional standards, regardless of art form.
  + Common Core State Standards (CCSS) have been adopted by more than 40 states, which will constitute a uniform pedagogical paradigm nationwide.
  + Schools are facing the twin pressures of declining finances and increased accountability compelling them to make tough choices as to what they spend their money on.
  + If we, as arts educators, are not seen to be contributing to student achievement within the framework defined by academic standards we will become a fringe activity only for, and funded by, the pre-disposed.

* The skills that will be required in a 21st century economy/society are the very skills developed through artistic practice and can be *transferred* to domains outside the arts.

* There are many intersections of commonality between various arts activities with the objectives set out in Common Core State Standards, particularly in English Language Arts.
  + Human beings’ use of language and all other forms of communication are rooted in their *artistic* capability.
* The current structure of arts education programming, developed over the past 30 years, inside and outside of the school building, is no longer adequate to address the current context.
  + An overemphasis on recall – memorize your lines, notes, staging, choreography, etc.
  + Basing what is done on the too nebulous benefits of self-expression and self-esteem.

**The challenges:**

* Integrate what is done in an arts activity with the expectations set by CCSS.
* Shift the focus from product (performances) to process (how you get there and what is learned along the way).
* Do not teach the arts the way you were taught.
  + Alter the mind set from strictly practitioner development for the interested few to developing skills needed by all students as they progress through life.

**THE FOCUS:** Learn how to “unpack” specific and appropriate Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts through an application of custom-generated arts related activities.

* Such a process will demonstrate for teachers and their administrators the value added benefit of what we do to what they already have to do.